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Cc: Michael Matheson MSP  
Lee Craigie, Active Travel Commissioner  
Councillor Anna Richardson  
Patrick Harvie MSP  
Patrick Grady MP

Ref: TF/IS/SI

30 August 2019

Dear Mr Waddell and copied: Michael Matheson MSP, Active Nation Commissioner Lee Craigie, Cllr Anna Richardson, Patrick Harvie MSP, and Patrick Grady MP,

**THE GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL, (UNIVERSITY AVENUE AND UNIVERSITY PLACE)  
(TRAFFIC REGULATION AND PARKING CONTROLS) ORDER 201\_**

Thank you for your response of 13th August to our TRO objection on the proposals for parking controls and painted cycle lanes on University Avenue.

We are writing to confirm that we will be upholding our objection to the TRO and are copying in others to ask them to consider changes to the current system that will ensure that active travel policies are upheld on road redevelopment projects. This system, which currently forces us to have to object so regularly, street by street, is not fit for the purpose of achieving the aspirations of an active travel nation under a recognised climate emergency.

The current situation surrounding the redevelopment plans for University Avenue is an important example of the failure within Scotland and its councils to work willingly and meaningfully towards an active travel nation. Even within a council such as Glasgow City Council, which has declared a climate emergency, subscribes to the Connectivity Commission findings, and has been lauded as Scotland's more forward thinking city in relation to cycling infrastructure, baseline standards such as adhering to Transport Scotland's transport hierarchy on road redevelopment projects are failing to be upheld. GoBike recently campaigned over the course of a year on plans for Byres Road, which initially failed to provide safe cycling space. Having finally seen a turn around in this provision, the plans for the adjoining street of University Avenue were then made public, and do not include protected space for cycling. It is for this reason that we are including Michael Matheson MSP, Active Nation Commissioner Lee Craigie, Councillor Anna Richardson, Patrick Harvie MSP, and Patrick Grady MP in our response.

A healthier, safer and greener active travel nation needs backing and support from the top down to ensure that our cities and rural areas gain a safe linked up network for travel by bike within the next few years. For that to be achieved by the estimated year of no return on climate change, 2035, would be too late. To achieve a linked up network within meaningful time, every single arterial road redevelopment simply has to create safe space for cycling, removing space from motor vehicles where required. There is a systemic failure to do this currently, and the system, and agencies making these decisions need to be held to account.

The background to our campaign on University Avenue can be found [here](#) and we attach our initial objection letter and subsequent reply from Glasgow City Council. The bottom line is that a direct arterial route through the west end of Glasgow, used by a large population of students and city commuters is to be redeveloped, with the cycling provision being retained as only one narrow painted cycle lane, on only one side of the road, interrupted by bus stops and laybys. As a vast amount of evidence has shown, the lane has for years been illegally used for parking and dropping off, continuously throughout the day. Pavements are to be widened (which we fully support), although space has not been increased using the campus grounds. The existing two way road traffic lanes are being retained. We argue that making this road one-way would provide enough space for protected cycle lanes to be provided, backed up by the reality of the temporary one-way works traffic lights on the road over the last few months having created no problematic traffic congestion at the site or on surrounding streets. Even had that had not been the case, the transport hierarchy should regardless, effect a removal of space from motor vehicles where it is purported that there is too little space for safer cycling.

A fatality occurred on University Avenue last year, as a woman crossing the road on foot, was struck by a motor vehicle. For this to have happened, and for a reduction in motor vehicle levels to not be a part of the solution, betrays a continued failure to recognise and respect Transport Scotland's Transport Hierarchy. University Avenue is already included as a GCC allocated cycle route on the Colleges "network". It should be a key link to other projects that might lead to a cycling network for the city such as Connecting Woodside, Yokecoco Cycling Village, Byres Road, and Queen Margaret Drive. But without protected cycling in the plans, it will be an unsafe gap in the network for many years to come.

And so we will absolutely not be removing our objection to this TRO. We are upholding our objection, and ask that you consider looking at how we can change the current system that forces us to have to continue to object in this way, street by street. A system that fails council and national policies by allowing for decisions being made to go unregulated, objections to be ignored, and permissions to be granted without adequate consultation or consideration of a need to move away from making ease of private car use the greatest priority.

To address a number of the specific points in the response to our TRO objection:

*“More severe traffic restrictions e.g. bus gates, were found to have a detrimental effect on adjacent streets such as Byres Road and were therefore discounted”.*

We can only assume that these were found via traffic modelling, which we know rarely takes into account the effect of future increased levels of active travel (see [citation](#)) while the real evidence is currently being displayed on University Avenue itself. The current one-way traffic light status ongoing during the works has shown no detrimental effect on traffic levels over the many months it has been in place.

*“The University has also taken a number of steps to improve the local campus environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The campus will be opened up with a number of signed routes, routes will remain accessible after hours.”*

Routes through the campus are not direct. Cycling routes in a city aiming to increase its extremely low cycling modal share need to be on direct arterial routes. This is well known and understood. Routes through campus may also be under-used for safety reasons on dark evenings, particularly by groups who currently have low rates of cycling such as women and older people.

*“Painted lines are a recognised means of cycle lane provision. It is noted that they are not ideal but they are the best that can be practicably achieved in this particular location.”*

The evidence we provided you with shows that painted lanes are dangerous. This is not the same as “not ideal”.

*“The university will investigate the practicability of introducing forms of light segregation, however there are concerns that this in turn may introduce a trip hazard.”*

We have been repeatedly told over the last six months that there might be an investigation into light segregation, and still have nothing to show that this is actually the case. There has been no effort made to consult with us, in the same way as there was no effort to consult with active travel organisations during the initial consultations. We would like to see the evidence and consultation of these considerations, particularly as we know that there are many soft segregation options and many that have never been shown to pose a trip risk.

*“The designers were required to work within the bounds of the existing public road limits. Unfortunately, as noted above, segregated cycle routes cannot physically be accommodated in both directions.”*

Officers did not act to ensure council policy was implemented. Glasgow City Council officers should have turned down the planning application for a proposal for road space precluding incorporation of active travel facilities, including segregated cycle lanes, in accordance with council policy. To gain approval, the university would then have had to offer some land to widen pavements / put some accesses across their land, to enable segregated cycle lanes.

*“In the case of University Avenue, the reasons why it was not feasible to reallocate road space in strict accordance with the user hierarchy -which would see a larger portion of the road being dedicated to cyclists - are derived from the presence of physical constraints (level change, gradient and pinch point) which, if a segregated route was to be introduced, would compromise the safety of the most vulnerable road users i.e. pedestrians.”*

We were startled to read this statement which appears to betray an attitude that people cycling are a danger. We would be keen to see your evidence on what has led to your assertion that provision for safe cycling on a road currently dominated by motor traffic would cause danger to people on foot.

*“The TRO process allows the public to formally object to the proposals and I can advise that the Council received 26 formal objections to the TRO. Several of these objections were supportive of the 20 mph speed limit.*

*Considering that staff and students of the university alone amount to almost 40,000 people, a figure increased significantly when considering local residents and businesses in the Hillhead / Byres Road area, the level of objection is relatively low in terms of other TRO consultations.”*

As previously noted, GoBike are also in support of the second TRO relating to the 20mph implementation. That is a separate TRO, and support for that TRO cannot be assumed as support for this one. Considering that this TRO was released out of university term time and during peak staff holiday period, the population of the university that you have quoted is far in excess of reality for the TRO responses possible. Perhaps it would be fairer to compare the number of letters of support that were received versus the 26 objecting responses and +700 petition signatures in order to determine whether the level of objection is low.

To confirm, we will not be withdrawing our objection to the TRO including a painted cycle lane on one side of University Avenue.

Yours sincerely



Tricia Fort  
for Consultations, GoBike

Attached: GoBike University Avenue TRO Waiting and Loading Objection 070619  
GCC response to GoBike Objection 130819